

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1-11 (Canceled).

12. (Currently Amended): A method of depigmenting and/or bleaching of ~~[[the]]~~ human skin in need of depigmenting and/or bleaching and/or ~~[[to]]~~ of improving the homogeneity of the color of ~~[[the]]~~ human skin in need of improving the homogeneity of color, comprising applying DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof to the human skin, wherein said metabolic derivative thereof is selected from the group consisting of 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol, 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol sulfate and 4-androstene-3,17-dione and said biological precursor thereof is selected from the group consisting of pregnenolone, 17 $\beta$ -hydroxypregnenolone, and 17 $\alpha$ -hydroxypregnenolone sulfate ~~and 5-androstenediol sulfate~~.

13. (Original): The method of Claim 12, wherein the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a composition.

14-15 (Canceled).

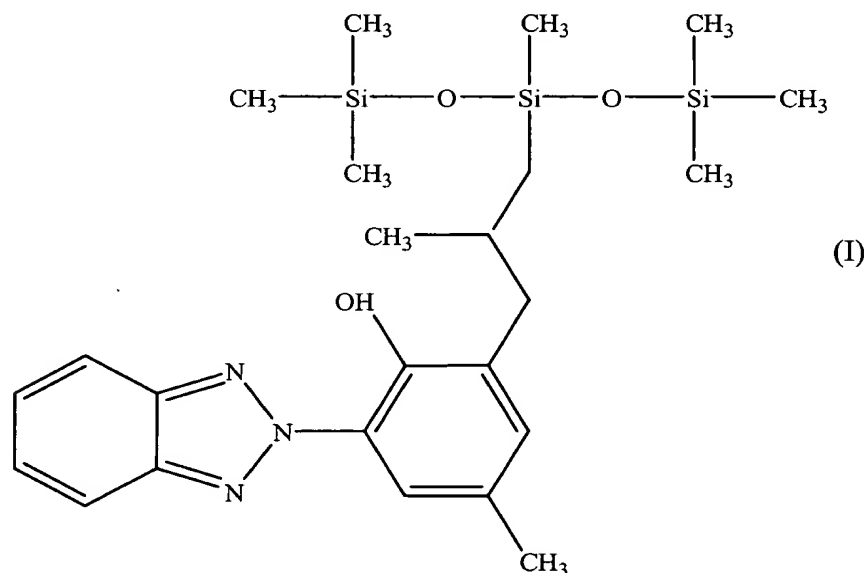
16. (Original): The method of Claim 12, wherein the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a composition comprising from 10<sup>-6</sup>% to 10% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

17. (Original): The method of Claim 16, wherein the composition comprises from 0.1% to 5% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

18. (Original): The method of Claim 16, wherein the composition comprises about 1% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

19. (Original): The method of Claim 13, wherein the composition further comprises at least one UV screening agent and/or one other depigmenting agent and/or one keratolytic agent.

20. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 19, wherein the composition further comprises a UV screening agent selected from the group consisting of dibenzoylmethane derivatives, benzylidenecamphor-based UVA-active screening agents, benzylidenecamphor-based UVB-active screening agents, benzimidazole-type or benzoxazole-type UVA-active screening agents, benzophenone derivatives, silane derivatives, polyorganosiloxanes containing a benzophenone group, benzotriazoles, benzotriazole silicones, triazine derivatives, cinnamic acid derivatives, alkyl 2-cyano-3,3-diphenylacrylates, octocrylene, the compound of formula I below,



and mixtures thereof.

21. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 19, wherein the composition further comprises said other depigmenting agent selected from the group consisting of kojic acid, ellagic acid, arbutin and derivatives thereof, hydroquinone, aminophenol derivatives, iminophenol derivatives, L-2-oxothiazolidone-4-carboxylic acid and salts or esters thereof, procysteine and salts or esters thereof, ascorbic acid and derivatives thereof, and plant extracts.

22. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 19, wherein the composition further comprises said keratolytic agent selected from the group consisting of  $\alpha$ -hydroxy acids,  $\beta$ -hydroxy acids,  $\alpha$ -keto acids,  $\beta$ -keto acids, retinoids, HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor, and sugar derivatives.

23. (Currently Amended): A method of pro-pigmenting human superficial body growths in need of pro-pigmenting, comprising applying DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof to the human superficial body growths, wherein said metabolic derivative thereof is selected from the group consisting of 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol, 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol sulfate and 4-androstene-3,17-dione and said biological precursor thereof is selected from the group consisting of pregnenolone, 17 $\alpha$ -hydroxypregnenolone, DHEA sulfate, and 17 $\alpha$ -hydroxypregnenolone sulfate ~~and 5-androstenediol sulfate~~.

24. (Original): The method of Claim 23, wherein the DHEA or at least one of biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a composition.

25-26 (Canceled).

27. (Original): The method of Claim 23, wherein the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a

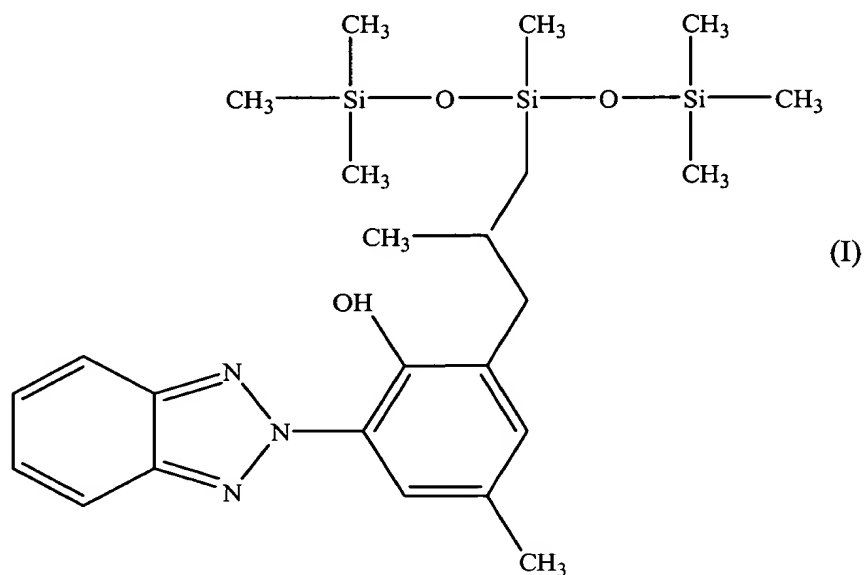
composition comprising from 10<sup>-6</sup>% to 10% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one of biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

28. (Original): The method of Claim 27, wherein the composition comprises from 0.1% to 5% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

29. (Original): The method of Claim 27, wherein the composition comprises about 1% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

30. (Original): The method of Claim 24, wherein the composition further comprises at least one UV screening agent and/or one other depigmenting agent and/or one keratolytic agent.

31. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 30, wherein the composition further comprises the UV screening agent selected from the group consisting of dibenzoylmethane derivatives, benzylidenecamphor-based UVA-active screening agents, benzylidenecamphor-based UVB-active screening agents, benzimidazole-type or benzoxazole-type UVA-active screening agents, benzophenone derivatives, silane derivatives, polyorganosiloxanes containing a benzophenone group, benzotriazoles, benzotriazole silicones, triazine derivatives, cinnamic acid derivatives, alkyl 2-cyano-3,3-diphenylacrylates, octocrylene, the compound of formula I below,



and mixtures thereof.

32. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 30, wherein the composition further comprises said other depigmenting agent selected from the group consisting of kojic acid, ellagic acid, arbutin and derivatives thereof, hydroquinone, aminophenol derivatives, iminophenol derivatives, L-2-oxothiazolidone-4-carboxylic acid and salts or esters thereof, procysteine and salts or esters thereof, ascorbic acid and derivatives thereof, and plant extracts.

33. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 30, wherein the composition further comprises said keratolytic agent selected from the group consisting of  $\alpha$ -hydroxy acids,  $\beta$ -hydroxy acids,  $\alpha$ -keto acids,  $\beta$ -keto acids, retinoids, HMG-COA reductase inhibitor, and sugar derivatives.

34-35 (Canceled).

36. (Withdrawn): A method of treating skin pigmentation marks, comprising applying DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof to superficial body growths, wherein said metabolic derivative thereof is selected from the group consisting of 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol, 5-androstene-3 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ -diol sulfate and 4-

androstene-3,17-dione and said biological precursor thereof is selected from the group consisting of pregnenolone, 17 $\alpha$ -hydroxypregnenolone, DHEA sulfate, 17 $\alpha$ -hydroxypregnenolone sulfate and 5-androstenediol sulfate.

37. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 36, wherein said pigmentation marks are actinic lentigo.

38. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 36, wherein the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a composition.

39. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 36, wherein the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof is applied in the form of a composition comprising from 10<sup>-6</sup>% to 10% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

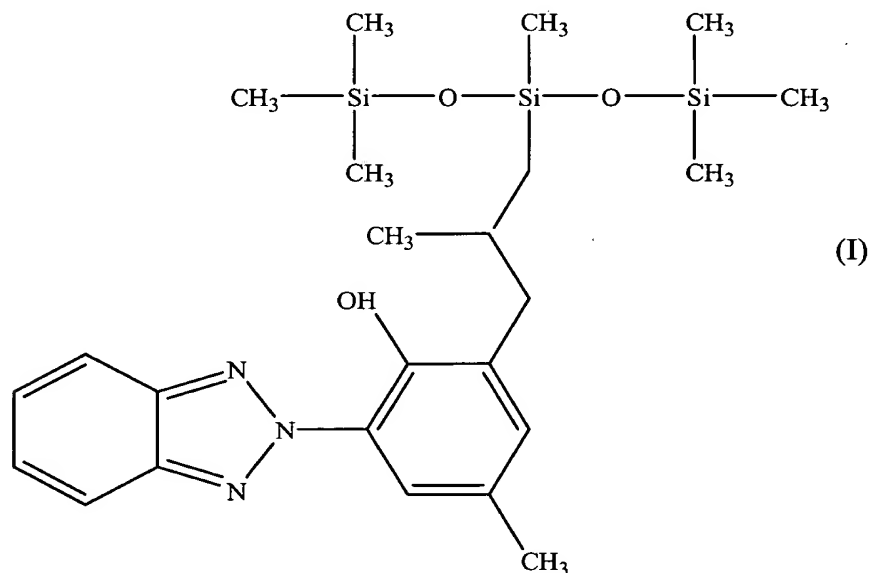
40. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 39, wherein the composition comprises from 0.1% to 5% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

41. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 39, wherein the composition comprises about 1% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition, of the DHEA or at least one biological precursor thereof or metabolic derivative thereof.

42. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 36, wherein the composition further comprises at least one UV screening agent and/or one other depigmenting agent and/or one keratolytic agent.

43. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 42, wherein the composition further comprises the UV screening agent selected from the group consisting of dibenzoylmethane derivatives, benzyldenecamphor-based UVA-active screening agents, benzyldenecamphor-

based UVB-active screening agents, benzimidazole-type or benzoxazole-type UVA-active screening agents, benzophenone derivatives, silane derivatives, polyorganosiloxanes containing a benzophenone group, benzotriazoles, benzotriazole silicones, triazine derivatives, cinnamic acid derivatives, alkyl 2-cyano-3,3-diphenylacrylates, octocrylene, the compound of formula I below,



and mixtures thereof.

44. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 42, wherein the composition further comprises said other depigmenting agent selected from the group consisting of kojic acid, ellagic acid, arbutin and derivatives thereof, hydroquinone, aminophenol derivatives, iminophenol derivatives, L-2-oxothiazolidone-4-carboxylic acid and salts or esters thereof, procysteine and salts or esters thereof, ascorbic acid and derivatives thereof, and plant extracts.

45. (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 42, wherein the composition further comprises said keratolytic agent selected from the group consisting of  $\alpha$ -hydroxy acids,  $\beta$ -

hydroxy acids,  $\alpha$ -keto acids,  $\beta$ -keto acids, retinoids, HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor, and sugar derivatives.